

### CORYNESPORA LEAF SPOT OF TABEBUIA

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The genus Tabebuia (Bignoniaceae) consists of about 100 species of shrubs or trees native to tropical America and the West Indies. A few species of Tabebuia greatly esteemed in warm regions, including Florida and Hawaii, are showy-flowered ornamentals (3,5). Tabebuia spp. are not without disease problems. A sample of T. caraiba Bureau, the yellow-flowered trumpet tree, with leaf spots (Fig. 1) was submitted to our plant disease clinic in January 1989.



**Figure 1.** Leaf spots on upper (left) and lower (right) surfaces of Tabebuia caraiba caused by Corynespora cassiicola. X 0.6 (DPI file 189014, Jeffrey W. Lotz).

**CAUSAL AGENT:** The fungus Corynespora cassiicola (Berk. & Curt.) Wei was consistently isolated from the leaf spots. This pathogen is common on a wide range of host plants (1,2,6,7,9), and is considered a predominantly tropical pathogen despite its common occurrence as a leaf, stem, and crown pathogen on cowpea and soybean in temperate areas of the U.S. and Canada (4). The disease caused by C. cassiicola is often designated by the common name "target spot", a disease familiar to Florida tomato and cucurbit growers. The elongate, gray conidia of Corynespora are wind-dispersed. Some research has revealed evidence of limited host specificity among a few isolates of C. cassiicola (8), but in general, the pathogen can be considered plurivorous, without host specificity. The fungus is capable of persisting as a saprophyte on dead plant tissue.

**SYMPTOMS:** Individual leaf spots are initially less than 1 mm in diameter but can expand to form circular to irregular spots over 2 cm across. The larger spots are brown with darker borders, may coalesce, and are not vein limited. The main vein and petioles may also be infected and often become necrotic (Fig. 1).

**CONTROL:** Current chemical control recommendations can be obtained from the local county Cooperative Extension Service.

**SURVEY AND DETECTION:** Look for brown circular to irregular leaf spots with darker borders and for main vein and petiole necrosis. Since C. cassiicola has a wide host range, can persist as a saprophyte, and exhibits limited host specialization among isolates, the pathogen might be present on lesions of other host plants in the vicinity of Tabebuia with Corynespora leaf spots.

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